

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 L-03 CPR-02 NSC-07 SS-20 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04 RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01

SP-03 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 018046

R 090931Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8492

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENTIANE 2867

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PGOV, LA, NV

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL ON DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS

REFERENCE: STATE 066842

1. I PAID A COURTESY CALL TODAY ON NORTH VIETNAMESE
AMBASSADOR LE VAN HIEN IN HIS CAPACITY AS DEAN OF
DIPLOMATIC CORPS. HIEN WAS OBVIOUSLY PLEASED AT THIS
GESTURE AND RECEIVED ME MOST CORDIALLY. WE DISCUSSED
PLANS FOR THE FORTHCOMING VISIT OF THE DIPLOMATIC
CORPS TO LUANG PRABANG FOR THE PI MAI FESTIVAL AND
ARRANGEMENTS FOR FORMAL CALLS AND DINNERS FOR THE NEW
FOREIGN MINISTER. HIEN MENTIONED HIS CLOSE ASSOCIATION
WITH AMBASSADORS UNGER AND SULLIVAN, AND GAVE EVERY
INDICATION OF WISHING TO BE FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL
AS REGARDS MATTERS AFFECTING THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS HERE.

2. THE ONLY MATTER OF SUBSTANCE ON WHICH WE TOUCHED
WERE THE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE NEW GOVERNMENT.
HIEN EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT LAOS WAS WASTING PRECIOUS
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LUMBER OWING TO THE MANNER IN WHICH SLASH AND BURN

AGRICULTURE IS BEING CONDUCTED AND OWING TO THE LACK OF PLANNING IN THE CUTTING DONE FOR LOCAL SAW MILLS. I ADDED THAT IRREGULARITIES IN THE LUMBER TRADE WERE ALSO COSTING THE LAO GOVERNMENT IMPORTANT AMOUNTS IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE. HE NOTED THE DEPENDENCE OF LANDLOCKED LAOS ON TRANSPORTATION ACROSS THAILAND AND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT ALTERNATE ROUTES ACROSS VIETNAM SHOULD BE DEVELOPED. I DID NOT GET THE IMPRESSION THAT HE EXPECTED LAO COMMERCE TO RETURN TO THE TRADITIONAL COLONIAL ROUTES IN THE NEAR FUTURE BUT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WILL DOUBTLESS TAKE STEPS TO MOVE IN THIS DIRECTION.

3. IN TALKING ABOUT OUR FAMILIES, HIEN REMARKED THAT HIS WIFE WAS ACTIVE IN WOMEN'S AFFAIRS IN NORTH VIETNAM AND WAS CURRENTLY AT A CONFERENCE OF WOMEN IN ALGIERS. HE DOES NOT EXPECT EITHER HIS WIFE OR GROWN CHILDREN TO RESIDE WITH HIM IN LAOS.

WHITEHOUSE

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NNN

Message Attributes

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30 JUN 2005

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